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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5206

UNCLAS USUN NEW YORK 000988

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [UNGA](#)

SUBJECT: UNGA/C-6: UNGA,S SIXTH (LEGAL) COMMITTEE DISCUSSES  
THE GENEVA CONVENTION PROTOCOLS

¶1. The 63rd UNGA Sixth Committee held its debate on agenda item 76, "Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Armed Conflicts," from October 23-24. The majority of delegations used this debate to list the efforts their own countries had made to support and implement international humanitarian law (IHL). Many delegations urged Member States to ratify and implement the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions.

¶2. Cuba and Syria accused Israel of violating IHL in regard to Palestinians. In a lengthy statement, the Syrian representative said that Israel has systematically targeted civilians, including children and the elderly. Syria accused Israel of destroying homes, monuments, houses of worship, and natural resources. Additionally, Syria stated that Israel has illegally used cluster munitions. Syria concluded that Israel should not be absolved of its legal responsibilities under the 4th Geneva Convention. Exercising its right of reply, Israel expressed regret that a member state had abused the platform of the debate on the Geneva Conventions in such a way, despite the limited time allotted for this topic. Israel pointed out that this state was under investigation for using and supporting terrorism to promote political objectives and concluded that such an abuse of the debate forum should be condemned.

¶3. The following delegations spoke: Australia (on behalf of CANZ), Mexico (on behalf of the Rio Group), France (on behalf of the EU), Sweden (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Kenya (on behalf of the Africa Group), Algeria, Columbia, Cuba, Japan, Qatar, Russia, Sudan, Switzerland, Syria, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, Venezuela, Vietnam. The following observers also gave interventions: the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.  
Khalilzad